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REVIEWS

The Negro in the New World. By SIR HARRY H. JOHNSTON.
New York: Macmillan, 1910. Pp. 495. \$6.00.

This book differs from others on the Negro in that it comprehends under one cover a study of all the Negro populations in the West Indies and in North and South America. The work is descriptive, historical, didactic, and beautifully illustrated. About two-thirds of the work deals with the Negro south of the United States, and for a general grasp of the history and present conditions of the Negro in that part of the world there is nothing in literature equal to it.

However, but scant praise can be given to that part of the book dealing with the Negro in the United States. The chapters on slavery in the South evince a narrowness of vision, bitterness, and vindictiveness of spirit which exceed anything to be found in the many biased histories covering that subject. The whole discussion is in the form of an "indictment of the southern states," in which the author plays the rôle of prosecuting attorney and excludes all evidence for the defendant.

"The steady perusal of many books and pamphlets," says the author, "published between 1830 and 1865, dealing with the maltreatment of the slaves in the Southern States, . . . leaves even the hardened reader and the cynical with a feeling of nausea, perhaps even with a desire for some posthumous revenge on the perpetrators of this outrage on humanity, worse than anything recorded in the nineteenth century of the Turk in Europe or the European in Congoland." The only wonder now is "that ten thousand men did not march behind John Brown to clear out this Augean stable." These statements are supported by a recital of the repressive slave laws, by several harrowing instances of cruelty to slaves (which could be multiplied "a thousand fold"), and by the starving to death of "thousands of Negroes" in the Mississippi Valley (even famines charged up in the "indictment" against the South!) "during the first half of the nineteenth century." The "Southerners" were not only "almost less concerned about the killing of a Negro than they were over the killing of a cow or a mule,

but they rather liked killing them for fun." The South Carolina masters were "pitiless devils," etc.

The reconstruction period is covered in a paragraph of thirteen lines, the substance of which is that the carpet-bag rule was admirable in spite of the evils that the White South "is supposed to have suffered." So incomplete has been the retribution visited upon the South that there is due a "missing chapter" to complete the punishment, or the "old-fashioned view of God's judgments" must be deserted. The author is informed that there is a "New South growing up which loathes and burns with shame for the wickedness of its ancestry." The Daughters of the Confederacy are held up to scorn and ridicule, and are especially culpable for perpetuating the memories of the Civil War.

Two chapters speak of education for the Negro since emancipation, limited mostly to the work of Hampton and Tuskegee, with scant mention of schools for Negroes maintained by the states. "In thirty years," says the author, "the North has spent ten million pounds for Negro education while the South has spent barely a million." (In fact, Virginia alone spent over twice that sum from 1870 to 1906 [*Rept. U.S. Com. Education, 1907, I, 271*]; and the annual expenditures in the former slave states for Negro common schools alone, according to Booker T. Washington, exceed \$6,000,000 [Strong, *Social Progress*, p. 154].)

The constructive industrial work of the South, it would seem, has been the exclusive work of northern men "sent" into the South, and none of it to native enterprise; and in doing this for the South the North has "borne the greater part of the penalty" for the South's sins.

A chapter on Negro Crime, in part admirable, denounces lynching with a vigor such as is usually displayed by southern newspapers, but it treats mob violence as a sectional evil, and censures the whole South for outrages upon the Negro, and rebukes the whites for attributing criminal propensities to all of the Negroes, whose outrages upon whites are but abnormal episodes of horror. "The South knows . . . that it has injured the Negro anciently and hates him on that account," and mob violence against him is "of course a remnant of the cruel slavery days," says the author, but he omits to say what mobs against the Negro in Boston, New York, and numerous places in the North and West are "of course a remnant of." He had not been informed, doubtless, that

mobs ever existed outside of the South, nor read the statement in the *New York Commercial* that "the South has seven times the population of New York City, yet it does not furnish seven times as many race riots," and that "it does not is more remarkable by the fact that the South has one hundred and thirty times as many Negroes as New York City."

An English writer especially should be able to recognize that slavery in the South was a local ulcer resulting from a poisonous draft imbibed by western civilization, and fixed upon the South by circumstances of climate and soil. The southern people admit that the abuses of slavery justified its surgical elimination, but an exposition of the abuses without considering the mass of slave-owners who did not ill-treat their slaves is palpably unjust, and at least gives a false coloring to the truth. If the author will consult the police records of London for five years he will find as many barbarous cruelties to children by their parents as he can find instances of cruelty to slaves in the whole history of the South; and, according to his reasoning, he ought to conclude that all the parents of that city are a set of barbarians or "pitiless devils." Even many cases of brutality to children do not justify the conclusion that London parents are barbarous; and no true estimate of their character can be formed without considering the millions of those who are not drunken, crazy, depraved, and do not perpetrate abnormal episodes of horror.

There are in the United States today occupations in which the death rate is frightful, as it was in a district in South Carolina, without any whole section of country being charged with inhumanity on account of it. Sir H. H. Johnston was evidently not informed that the mortality of the Negro under slavery was much lower than it has been since and in many places lower than that of the whites. In Charleston where those "pitiless devils" lived the Negro mortality before the Civil War was lower than that of the whites, so that those "pitiless devils" were so inhuman that they took better care of their slaves than of themselves. The Negro mortality in Savannah, Mobile, and New Orleans was also less than that of the whites (Hoffman, *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, pp. 53-54). These facts do not lend great weight to the idea that "Southerners" were "less concerned about the killing of a Negro than they were over the killing of a cow or mule, but rather liked killing them for fun."

As for the repressive slave laws, the author might have admitted, as Thwaites does, that "the actual treatment of the slave by his owner was not so barbarous as the laws suggest." In the two recitals of cruelty to slaves most emphasized by the author (the cases being fifteen years apart) it is significant that in each case the culprit was condemned and punished by law; yet such records "exceed in barbarism the Turk in Europe or the European in Congoland"! That the Negroes did not revenge themselves on the whites, during the war, when the men were away from home, nor later when the whites were helpless in the hands of the federal troops, is some evidence that the treatment of the slaves was not altogether barbarous. As Professor Shaler of Harvard says, "If the accepted account of the Negro had been true, if he had been for generations groaning in servitude . . . the South should have flamed in insurrection at the first touch of war." Probably no present-day scholar in American history would now question the statement of a northern observer who visited the South in 1844, that "on principle, in habit, and even on grounds of self-interest the greater part of the slave-owners were humane, not over-exacting, and sincerely interested in the physical well-being of their dependents."

The author's defamatory statements about southern character, culture, manners, morals, and domestic life are based only upon the worst aspects in which these have been represented, and the whole picture is a gross distortion of the truth of history. By a similar culling of only the bad, any civilization, ancient or modern, may be "indicted" for barbarism.

The author asserts that "in nearly all the eleven Southern States of Secession" on account of "mob laws" the "colored man is practically without a voice in either municipal or political affairs." A refutation of this "indictment" may be found in the last issue of the *Independent* (January 26), which says: "We lately gave the testimony of one who accompanied Dr. Booker Washington in his recent tour in North Carolina to the effect that he did not find that anywhere he went Negroes who paid their taxes found any difficulty in voting. We now see a letter in the *New York Age* saying the same is true for Tennessee where both parties wanted the Negro votes and both got them." It is known that large masses of both whites and Negroes remain away from the polls unless

organized effort is made to get them out, and that the Negroes do not vote more is because they are not solicited to do so.

As to the author's effusion on the subject of social equality several things should be said. First, that even the leaders of public sentiment in the North do not favor social equality under present conditions in the South. Second, that it is now out of fashion to condemn the South for proscriptions against the Negro which obtain throughout the North and West wherever the Negroes are found in considerable numbers (see Dubois, *Philadelphia Negro*). Third, that if only a small number of Negroes lived in the South they would be objects of curiosity, as they are in London, Paris, and Boston, and southern men would no more hesitate to sit at banquet with an African prince than did King Edward; and, having nothing to fear or suffer from such social freedom, all proscriptive laws and customs would be abolished and the southern people could then felicitate themselves on their moral superiority to the rest of the world.

Some of the author's conclusions in the latter part of his book are in strange and illogical contrast with his sweeping "indictment." He says, "the fact was evident to me, after a tour through the eastern and southern states of North America, that nowhere in the world—certainly not in Africa—has the Negro been given such a chance of mental and physical development as in the United States. . . . Politically he is freer, socially he is happier than in any other part of the world." The fact that the Negro now remains in the South, says the author, "shows that he is not on the whole badly treated."

In the author's description of present-day life, conditions, and scenes in the South he writes without fault. He is a master in observation and description, and his comments upon what he sees are rational and valuable.

In his attempt, however, to judge and reconstruct history he has betrayed a lack of that breadth of outlook and judicial temper which alone give value to historical interpretations.

The reason that so excellent a writer and gentleman as Sir H. H. Johnston should have marred his book in the way above indicated must be explained by the unfortunate selection of pilots who led him into the South. He first fell in with the brother of a reconstruction governor of South Carolina who introduced him to the men of New York concerned in Negro education in the

South. One of these, Mr. Ogden, accompanied the author to the Hampton and Tuskegee schools, and in the latter he found a white man who furnished him information and statistics, etc. In view of this line of approach to the South, and what followed, one is inclined to question the statement of the author that the northern men and women sent into the South have always been "just the right kind." There is a belief among southern people that these missionaries have not always been "just the right kind," that they have sometimes inspired distrust and hatred of the whites where formerly prevailed good feeling and confidence; and the suspicion cannot but come to mind that had Sir H. H. Johnston fallen in with a different set of pilots his book would have breathed a far different spirit and would not have been an agency for rekindling the bad passions of the past which lapse of time and enlightened understanding had almost totally subdued.

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Land and Labour: Lessons from Belgium. By B. SEEBOHM ROWNTREE. New York: Macmillan, 1910. Pp. 633. \$3.50.

Those familiar with the author's work on *Poverty* from a study of York, England, will welcome the present volume. From a very different point of view this work is also a study of poverty. The purpose of the work is stated in the preface. "This book is written in the hope of contributing to the solution of the problem of poverty in Britain by throwing some light on its relation to the system of land tenure."

Aside from the conclusion and appendices the book is divided into five parts. In the first part, under the title "Some Fundamental Factors in the Social and Economic Condition of Belgium," the author discusses the physiography of the country, a brief history of the country and its constitution, the history of land tenure, the number of land owners, the size of farms, the laws of succession and inheritance, and their influence on the size of the farms. As Belgian experience is intended to help solve problems in Great Britain a comparison is always made where possible of the conditions in the two countries.

In the second division are discussed "Industrial Conditions,"